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Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences 5 (2010) 498–501

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**Procedia**  
Social and Behavioral Sciences

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WCPCG-2010

# Drug addiction among undergraduate students of private universities in Bangladesh

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Received January 2, 2010; revised February 3, 2010; accepted February 29, 2010

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## Abstract

The present study was conducted to get an idea of drug addiction in undergraduate students of private universities in Bangladesh. Researcher also exposed the causes of drug addiction, types of drugs they mainly used and their treatment taking attitude. Sample was selected on the basis of purposive sampling technique. Researcher met them individually to collect the data by using questionnaire. For this purpose 160 samples were selected from different private universities. Age range of the subjects was from 15 to 25 years. Result revealed that 38.75% respondents were addicted because of influenced by friends and 31.88% respondents involved in drug addiction of just trying to do something new. 86.87% respondents were taking ganja which was the highest among different drugs, 86.87% respondents were aware of treatment for drug addiction though the rate of taking treatment for drug addiction was less. Among them 41.93% respondents were involved with drugs again after taking treatment. In conclusion it can be said that students mainly took drugs to have fun or just for the sake of curiosity though their treatment taking attitude was in very low stage.

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## 1. Introduction

Drug Addiction is a controversial topic for all the people of our country, especially for the teenagers. One of the largest problems in society today is teenage drug abuse which affects us in our daily lives. It ruins families and destroys relationships. Essentially, drugs are a pain killer. They may seem to avert emotional and physical pain by providing the user with a temporary and illusionary escape from or way to cope with life's realities. In fact, more problems--serious ones--are created by using and abusing drugs. The person looks on drugs as a cure for unwanted feelings. The painkilling effects of drugs or alcohol become a solution to their discomfort. This release is the main reason a person uses drugs or drinks a second or third time. It is just a matter of time before he becomes fully addicted and loses the ability to control his drug use. Drug addiction, then, results from excessive or continued use of physiologically habit-forming drugs in an attempt to resolve the underlying symptoms of discomfort or unhappiness.

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A person experiments with an addictive drug like cocaine. Perhaps he intends to try it just once, for "the experience" of it. It turns out, though, that he enjoys the drug's euphoric effect so much that in ensuing weeks and months he uses it again -- and again. But in due time, he decides he really should quit. He knows that despite the incomparable short-term high he gets from using cocaine, the long-term consequences of its use are perilous. So he promises to stop using it. His brain, however, has a different agenda. It now demands cocaine. While his rational mind knows full well that he shouldn't use it again, his brain overrides such warnings. Unbeknown to him, repeated use of cocaine has brought about dramatic changes in both the structure and function of his brain. And so, despite his heartfelt vow never again to use cocaine, he continues using it. His drug use is now beyond his control. It is compulsive and he is addicted.

There are various reasons for a teenager to take to drug abuse, from just curiously and a tendency to experiment with. It may be an expression of his revolt against established authority, a way of gaining recognition in his group or influence of friends, s/he may just not be able to say 'NO' when offered or failure of teenage love or family Problem or Childhood Sex Abuse.

The effects of drug addiction are felt on many levels: personal, friends, family and societal. Individuals who use drugs and alcohol experience a wide array of physical effects due to their drug and alcohol addiction that they had never anticipated. Additional effects of drug addiction include tolerance, withdrawal, sickness, overdose age, and resorting to a life of crime. The effects of drug addiction can disrupt family life and create destructive patterns of codependency. The effect of drug addiction on society manifests itself through lost work time and inefficiency. **Liddle, H. (2008)**, in his research paper named "Drug Abuse in Teenagers", he found that teenager faces some problems like Behavior problems, Emotional distancing, isolation, depression, or fatigue, irritability, or change in level of cooperation around the house, decrease in interest in personal appearance, rapid weight loss, Changes in mood, eating, or sleeping patterns and memory problems after taking drugs. **Cepulkauskaitė, I. (1998)** in her research named "Drug addiction of teenager: A myth or reality" he found that, it is a combination of several factors, including society, family and peers. They may turn to drugs to escape stress or loneliness or to overcome shyness in social situations. They may want to be seen as grown up or as a risk takes or they may simply be curious. A young person with low self-esteem may feel they are not as smart, attractive, talented or popular as their peers. **Gerstein, R (1996)** conducted a one-year follow-up study of patients from 78 treatment programs across the country and found that approximately, 50% of the patients refused regardless of the primary drug and the treatment approach.

**1.1 Objectives:** The objective of this research was to find out the current condition of drug addiction among the students in private universities. Researcher also wanted to know the causes of drug addiction, what types of drug mainly they used and are they really interested to take the treatment.

## 2. Methodology

**2.1 Sample:** The data of this research is collected from private universities in Dhaka city. Researcher used the random number sampling to select private universities. Researcher has used purposive sampling method for selecting the drug addicted people. Researcher at first contacted with his friends/students who have drug addicted friends and later they introduced researcher with other addicted. The sample table is given below:

| Name of the Universities             | Sample Size | Gender | Sample Size relates with Gender |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|--------|---------------------------------|
| BRAC Universities                    | 40          | M      | 21                              |
|                                      |             | F      | 19                              |
| North South University               | 40          | M      | 20                              |
|                                      |             | F      | 20                              |
| Independent University of Bangladesh | 40          | M      | 17                              |
|                                      |             | F      | 23                              |
| East West University                 | 40          | M      | 22                              |
|                                      |             | F      | 18                              |
| 160                                  |             |        |                                 |

**2.2 Measuring Instrument:** Researcher collects the data from the study area by questionnaire survey. The questionnaires is formed mainly based on the age and gender of respondents, causes of drug addiction, what types of drugs s/he tried out, treatment seeking attitude etc.

**2.3 Procedure:** To gain the primary data, researcher went through the private universities to met with the sample. Researcher interviewed them and maintained the confidentiality.

### 3.0 Result

The result of this research has been presented in the following ways:

**3.1: Number of respondents who tried out:** From the result it is shown that 66.87% respondents have tried drugs occasionally and 33.13% respondents have tried drugs frequently.

**3.2: The causes of Drug addiction:** From 160 respondents, 15.62% respondents get addicted cause of failure in love, 13.75% respondents get addicted cause of trying to forget family problem, 38.75% respondents get addicted cause of influenced by friends and 31.88% respondents get involve in drug addiction cause of just trying something new.

**3.3: Starting stage of taking drugs:** From 160 respondents, 3.13% respondents are taking drug from below secondary level, 26.25% respondents are taking drug from secondary level, 28.75% respondents are taking drugs from higher secondary level and 41.87% respondents are taking drug from after higher secondary level.

**3.4: Types of Drugs the addicted respondents mainly used:** From the result, it is found that 3.12% respondents tried out Phyathaddrin, 52.5% respondents tried out Phencyclidine, 23.12% tried out Heroin, 44.38% respondents tried out Charas, 30% respondents tried out Marijuana, 41.25% respondents tried out Ecstasy, 39.38% respondents tried out Cocaine, 86.87% respondents tried out Ganja and 16.25% respondents tried out LSD. The use of phencyclidine, Charas and Ganja are the higher amount because of the price is low and these are available.

**3.5: Awareness of treatment of drug addiction:** From 160 respondents, 86.87% respondents are aware of treatment for drug addiction and 13.13% respondents are not aware.

**3.6: Taking treatment for drug addiction:** From 160 respondents, 19.37% respondents have taken treatment for drug addiction and 80.63% respondents haven't any treatment for it.

**3.7: Attempt for drugs again after taking treatment:** From 160 respondents only 31 respondents have taken any treatment for drug addiction. From them 41.93% respondents are tried drugs again after taken treatment and 58.07% respondents haven't tried again.

### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The research is mainly based on the students of private universities of Bangladesh whose are taking drugs or used to taking drugs from their teenage. The age of most of the respondents lies on 20 to 25 years range and few of them are lies on 15 to 19 years range. Compare to male respondents the female respondents are deny saying any thing. Higher number of respondents tried drugs occasionally. According to this research male are taking drugs more frequently than female and female respondents take drug on occasionally. Mainly they are aware of the damage of the drug addiction but they take it as a fun and they thought that these small amounts of drugs can harm only a little bit to their body. Moreover most of them believe that at any time they can able to free from addiction.

The respondents who are taking drugs on a regular basis, most of them start taking drugs as occasionally for the first time. Every drug user starts out as an occasional user, and that initial use is a voluntary and controllable decision. But as time passes and drug use continues in more subtle ways, that can result in compulsive and even uncontrollable drug use. The causes of drugs addiction is a very broad area of discussion. Most try to come up with excuses such as, "they're depressed" or "peer pressure." Teenagers get bored very easily. In life we all go through our droughts. When this occurs, it seems like the minute hand on the clock is counting hours. At this point, teens

feel they have nothing better to do with their time. He/she is either all alone or with friends, again it is all curiosity. Sports and other curriculums are shunned by many teens, because of the appearance they give off. They want something new in their lives. Teens tend to find that drugs pass the time with ease. Drugs can make them feel like they aren't doing nothing because they are on something.

Sometimes they do it by following their parents. Many parents use drugs daily. Role models have an impact on everyone's life. So they follow their parent's footsteps. Moreover, when a love relationship is come to an end by break up, most of the teenagers can't take it normally, and they become frustrated. For getting relief from frustration, they are taking drugs. Family problem is one of the major causes of drug addiction. The children of broken family or the children who are not getting enough time from their parents, have the possibility to addicted on drugs just cause of the family problem. Influence of friends is one of the prime causes of drug addiction. That means grouping. If an individual have a friend circle of upper classes, if they possess the habits of smoking and taking drugs. In that case, he or she may have taste those thing to maintain their social status. Most of the respondents are taking drugs since higher secondary or after higher secondary stage.

Greater respondents are took short tem residential treatment. And rest of them took Outpatient Drug-Free Treatment or Long-Term Residential Treatment or Community-Based Treatment. The respondents who took treatment, among them some respondents are tried drugs again after taken treatment. Male respondents are greater in quantity. The reason they told that the society was also neglect them after taken treatment Any where they went, when people heard that he was an addicted, most of the people discourage them rather than appreciate. Some of them were not get the proper support from the family and some of them went to drugs again cause of their addicted friends.

In Bangladesh it has been a controversial issue and now it is becoming an intolerable issue. So, whole nation should come forward to take some measures, as a community. Governmental regulation and legislation should be introduced to drug dealers, suppliers and also to the users. Family restrictions should be there for teenage boys and girls. They should be provided a restricted pocket money and stop them to go anywhere as they wish. Parents should monitor their friendship. Most of the drugs came in our country in a illegal way. So if our police and army get alert, we can reduce drug addiction. In this research there are some limitations like in the eye of Bangladesh's culture, drug addicted are treated like criminal. So, addicted are very much disappointed and they were not interested to talk with the researcher. It was very difficult for researcher to get that much information that she needed. It would be good if we can collect more data from other private universities and if we can include family members.

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